IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-9, 25-28 and 30 without prejudice, and amend the claims as follows:

1- 9.   (Canceled)

10.   (Original)   A method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising a plurality of list types and a sorting program, wherein the sorting program comprises (i) a list sorter comprising a sorting component and a generic data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; and (ii) a list instance for each of the plurality of list types, each list instance comprising a viewable data retrieval component configured to provide data to the generic data retrieval component and at least one list instance comprising a specific data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; the method comprising:

invoking the sorting component in response to receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list instance;

calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance if the data items of the first list instance are not sortable in a default format;

calling the generic data retrieval component if the data items of the first list instance are sortable in the default format;

if the generic data retrieval component is called, calling the viewable data retrieval component; and

sorting, by the sorting component, the data items of the first list instance.

11.   (Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance comprises overriding the generic data retrieval component.

12.   (Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the list instances do not include the specific data retrieval component.

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13.   (Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein the specific data retrieval component is configured to transform the data items of the first list instance from the default format into a format sortable by the sorting component.

14.   (Original)   The method of claim 11, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the format sortable by the sorting component comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

15.   (Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in a sortable format to the sorting component without invoking the viewable data retrieval component, wherein the sortable format is different from the default format if the default format is not sortable and is the same as the default format if the default format is sortable; and wherein if the viewable data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in the default format to the sorting component.

16.   (Original)   The method of claim 10, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, further comprising:
    transforming the data items from the default format to a sortable format; and
    returning the data items in the sortable format to the sorting component.

17.   (Original)   The method of claim 15, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

18.   (Currently Amended)   A ~~signal bearing~~ computer-readable storage medium, comprising a sorting program, wherein the sorting program comprises (i) a list sorter comprising a sorting component and a generic data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; and (ii) a list instance for each of a plurality of list types, each list instance comprising a viewable data retrieval component configured to provide data to the generic data retrieval component and at least one list instance

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PAGE 4/9 * RCVD AT 7/13/2005 4:05:08 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-1/5 * DNIS:8729306 * CSID:7136234846 * DURATION (mm-ss):02-22

comprising a specific data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; wherein the sorting program, when executed by a processor, performs a method of sorting lists, comprising:

invoking the sorting component in response to receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list instance;

calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance if the data items of the first list instance are not sortable in a default format;

calling the generic data retrieval component if the data items of the first list instance are sortable in the default format;

if the generic data retrieval component is called, calling the viewable data retrieval component; and

sorting, by the sorting component, the data items of the first list instance.

19.   (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein at least a portion of the list instances do not include the specific data retrieval component.

20.   (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein the specific data retrieval component is configured to transform the data items of the first list instance from the default format into a format sortable by the sorting component.

21.   (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance comprises overriding the generic data retrieval component.

22.   (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in a sortable format to the sorting component without invoking the viewable data retrieval component, wherein the sortable format is different from the default format if the default format is not sortable and is the same as the default format if the default format is

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sortable; and wherein if the viewable data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in the default format to the sorting component.

23. (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, further comprising:

transforming the data items from the default format to a sortable format; and

returning the data items in the sortable format to the sorting component.

24. (Currently Amended)   The computer-readable storage medium of claim 23, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

25-28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented)   A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

receiving a request to sort data items of a list of a particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items are sortable in a default format;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type because the data items are not sortable in the default format; and

sorting the data items, wherein sorting the data items comprises providing the data items to a list sorter for which the generic data retrieval method is defined; wherein the list sorter and the generic data retrieval method are components of a class and the specific data retrieval method is a component of a subclass.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended)   A computer readable storage medium, comprising a program, wherein the program, when executed by a processor, performs an operation

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of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the operation comprising:

receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items of the first list are sortable in their default format;

sorting the data elements of the first list in their default format;

receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because the data items of the second list are not sortable in their default format;

when the specific data retrieval method is called, transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to a sortable format, wherein transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length; and

sorting the data items of the second list in the sortable format.

32. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium, comprising a program, wherein the program, when executed by a processor, performs an operation of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the operation comprising:

receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items of the first list are sortable in their default format;

sorting the data elements of the first list in their default format;

receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because the data items of the second list are not sortable in their default format; and

sorting the data items of the second list in the sortable format;

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wherein sorting the data items of the first and second lists comprises providing the data items to a list sorter for which the generic data retrieval method is defined; and wherein the list sorter and the generic data retrieval method are components of a class and the specific data retrieval method is a component of a subclass.

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